

which he had, that was nigh guttled already, made him view with sorrow the almost empty kettle, the dear casket where his treasure lay: So that stomaching mightily his master's defection from Camacho's feast, he sullenly paced on after Rozinante, very much out of humour, though he had just filled his belly.

CHAPTER XXII

AN ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT ADVENTURE OF MONTESINOS' CAVE, SITUATED IN THE HEART OF LA MANCHA, WHICH THE VALOROUS DON QUIXOTE SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED

THE new-married couple entertained Don Quixote very nobly, in acknowledgment of his readiness to defend their cause; they esteemed his wisdom equal to his valour, and thought him both a Cid in arms, and a Cicero in arts. Honest Sancho too, recruited himself to the purpose, during the three days his master stayed, and so came to his good humour again. Basil then informed them that Quiteria knew nothing of his stratagem; but being a pure device of his own, he had made some of his nearest friends acquainted with it, that they should stand by him if occasion were, and bring him off upon the discovery of the deceit.—“It deserves a handsomer name,” said Don Quixote, “since conducive to so good and honourable an end, as the marriage of a loving couple. By the way, sir, you must know that the greatest

obstacle to love, is want and a narrow fortune: for the continual bands and cements of mutual affection are mirth, content, satisfaction, and jollity. These, managed by skilful hands, can make variety in the pleasures of wedlock, preparing the same thing always with some additional circumstance, to render it new and delightful. But when pressing necessity and indigence deprive us of those pleasures that prevent satiety, the yoke of matrimony is often found very galling, and the burden intolerable."

These words were chiefly directed by Don Quixote to Basil, to advise him by the way to give over those airy sports and exercises, which indeed might feed his youth with praise, but not his old age with bread, and to bethink himself of some grave and substantial employment, that might afford him a competency, and something of a stock for his declining years. Then pursuing his discourse: "The honourable poor man," said he, "if the poor can deserve that epithet, when he has a beautiful wife, is blessed with a jewel: He that deprives him of her, robs him of his honour, and may be said to deprive him of his life. The woman that is beautiful, and keeps her honesty when her husband is poor, deserves to be crowned with laurel, as the conquerors were of old. Beauty

is a tempting bait, that attracts the eyes of all beholders, and the princely eagles, and the most high-flown birds stoop to its pleasing lure. But when they find it in necessity, then kites and crows, and other ravenous birds, will all be grappling with the alluring prey. She that can withstand these dangerous attacks, well deserves to be the crown of her husband. However, sir, take this along with you as the opinion of a wise man, whose name I have forgot; he said, there was but one good woman in the world, and his advice was, that every married man should think his own wife was she, as being the only way to live contented. For my own part, I need not make the application to myself, for I am not married, nor have I as yet any thoughts that way; but if I had, it would not be a woman's fortune, but her character, should recommend her; for public reputation is the life of a lady's virtue, and the outward appearance of modesty is in one sense as good as the reality; since a private sin is not so prejudicial in this world, as a public indecency. If you bring a woman honest to your bosom, it is easy keeping her so, and perhaps you may improve her virtues. If you take an unchaste partner to your bed, it is hard mending her; for the extremities of vice and virtue

are so great in a woman, and their points so far asunder, that it is very improbable, I won't say impossible, they should ever be reconciled."

Sancho, who had patiently listened so far, could not forbear making some remarks on his master's talk. "This master of mine," thought he to himself, "when I am talking some good things, full of pith and marrow, as he may be now, was wont to tell me that I should tie a pulpit at my back, and stroll with it about the world to retail my rarities; but I might as well tell him, that when once he begins to tack his sentences together, a single pulpit is too little for him; he had need have two for every finger, and go peddling about the market and cry, Who buys my ware? Old Nick take him for a knight-errant! I think he is one of the seven wise masters.¹ I thought he knew nothing but his knight-errantry, but now I see the devil a thing can escape him; he has an oar in every man's boat, and a finger in every pye." As he muttered this somewhat loud his master overheard him. "What is that thou art grumbling about, Sancho?" said he.—"Nothing, sir, nothing," quoth Sancho. "I was only wishing I had heard your worship preach this doctrine before I married, then mayhap I might have with

¹ See Appendix, Note 1, Chapter XXII.

the old proverb said, A sound man needs no physician."—"What, is Teresa so bad then?" asked Don Quixote.—"Not so very bad neither," answered Sancho; "nor yet so good as I would have her."—"Fie, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "thou dost not do well to speak ill of thy wife, who is a good mother to thy children."—"There is no love lost, sir," quoth Sancho, "for she speaks as ill of me, when the fit takes her, especially when she is in one of her jealous moods, for then Old Nick himself could not bear her maundering."

Don Quixote having tarried three days with the young couple, and been entertained like a prince, he entreated the student, who fenced so well, to help him to a guide that might conduct him to Montesinos' cave, resolving to go down into it, and prove by his own eye-sight the wonders that were reported of it round the country. The student recommended a cousin-german of his for his conductor, who, he said, was an ingenious lad, a pretty scholar, and a great admirer of books of knight-errantry, and could show him the famous lake of Ruydera too: adding, that he would be very good company for the knight, as being one that wrote books for the booksellers, in order to dedicate them to great men. Accordingly, the learned

cousin came, mounted on an ass with foal; his pack-saddle covered with an old carpet, or coarse packing-cloth. Thereupon Sancho having got ready Rozinante and Dapple, well stuffed his wallet, and the student's knapsack to boot, they all took their leave, steering the nearest course to Montesinos' cave.

To pass the time on the road, Don Quixote asked the guide, to what course of study he chiefly applied himself?—"Sir," answered the scholar, "my business is writing, and copy-money my chief study. I have published some things with the general approbation of the world, and much to my own advantage. Perhaps, sir, you may have heard of one of my books called, 'The Treatise of Liveries and Devices;' in which I have obliged the public with no less than seven hundred and three sorts of liveries and devices, with their colours, mottos, and cyphers; so that any courtier may furnish himself there upon any extraordinary appearance, with what may suit his fancy or circumstances, without racking his own invention to find what is agreeable to his inclination. I can furnish the jealous, the forsaken, the disdained, the absent, with what will fit them to a hair. Another piece, which I now have on the anvil, I design to call the 'Metamorphosis,

or The Spanish Ovid;' an invention very new and extraordinary. It is in short, 'Ovid Burlesqued;' wherein I discover who the Giralda¹ of Seville was; who the angel of Magdalen; I tell ye what was the pipe of Vecinguerra of Cordova, what the bulls of Guisando, the Sierra Morena, the fountains of Laganitos, and Lavapies at Madrid; not forgetting that of Piojo, nor those of the golden pipe, and the abbey; and I embellish the fables with allegories, metaphors, and translations, that will both delight and instruct. Another work, which I soon design for the press, I call a supplement to Polydore Virgil,² concerning the invention of things; a piece, I will assure you, sir, that shows the great pains and learning of the compiler, and perhaps in a better style than the old author. For example, he has forgot to tell us, who was the first that was troubled with a catarrh in the world; and who was the first that was fluxed for the French disease. Now, sir, I immediately resolve it, and confirm my assertion by the testimony of at least four-and-twenty authentic writers; by which quotations alone, you may guess, sir, at what

¹ All these are noted things, or places in Spain, on which many fabulous stories are grounded. See Appendix, Note 2, Chapter XXII.

² See Appendix, Note 3, Chapter XXII.

pains I have been to instruct and benefit the public."

Sancho having hearkened with great attention all this while, "Pray, sir," quoth he to him, "so heaven guide your right hand in all you write, let me ask you who was the first man that scratched his head?"—"Scratched his head, friend," answered the author.—"Ay, sir, scratched his head?" quoth Sancho: "Sure you that know all things, can tell me that, or the devil is in it! What think you of old father Adam?"—"Old father Adam?" answered the scholar: "let me see—father Adam had a head, he had hair, he had hands, and he could scratch: But father Adam was the first man; *Ergo*, Father Adam was the first man that scratched his head. It is plain you are in the right."—"O ho, am I so, sir?" quoth Sancho. "Another question, by your leave, sir, Who was the first tumbler in the world?"—"Truly, friend," answered the student, "that is a point I cannot resolve you without consulting my books; but as soon as ever I get home, I will study night and day to find it out."—"For two fair words," quoth Sancho, "I will save you that trouble."—"Can you resolve that doubt?" asked the author.—"Ay, marry, can I," said Sancho: "The first tumbler in the

world was Lucifer; when he was cast out of heaven he tumbled into hell."—"You are positively in the right," said the scholar.—"Where did you get that, Sancho?" said Don Quixote; "for I dare swear it is none of your own."—"Mum!" quoth Sancho. "In asking of foolish questions, and selling of bargains, let Sancho alone, quo' I; I do not want the help of my neighbours."—"Truly," said Don Quixote, "thou hast given thy question a better epithet than thou art aware of: For there are some men who busy their heads, and lose a world of time in making discoveries, the knowledge of which is good for nothing upon the earth, unless it be to make the discoverers laughed at."

With these, and such diverting discourses, they passed their journey, till they came to the cave the next day, having lain the night before in an inconsiderable village on the road. There they bought a hundred fathom of cordage to hang Don Quixote by, and let him down to the lowest part of the cave; he being resolved to go to the very bottom, were it as deep as hell. The mouth of it was inaccessible, being quite stopped up with weeds, bushes, brambles, and wild fig-trees, though the entrance was wide and spacious. Don Quixote was no sooner

come to the place, but he prepared for his expedition into that under-world, telling the scholar, that he was resolved to reach the bottom, though deep as the profound abyss; and all having alighted, the squire and his guide accordingly girt him fast with a rope. While this was doing, "Good sweet sir," quoth Sancho, "consider what you do. Do not venture into such a cursed black hole! Look before you leap, sir, and be not so wilful as to bury yourself alive. Do not hang yourself like a bottle or a bucket, that is let down to be soused in a well. Alack-a-day, sir, it is none of your business to pry thus into every hole, and go down to the pit of hell for the nonce."—"Peace, coward," said the knight, "and bind me fast; for surely for me such an enterprise as this is reserved."—"Pray, sir," said the student, "when you are in, be very vigilant in exploring and observing all the rarities in the place. Let nothing escape your eyes, perhaps you may discover there some things worthy to be inserted in my *Metamorphoses*."—"Let him alone," quoth Sancho, "he will go through stitch with it: He will make a hog or a dog of it, I will warrant you."

Don Quixote being well bound, not over his

armour, but his doublet, bethought himself of one thing they had forgot.—"We did ill," said he, "not to provide ourselves with a little bell, that I should have carried down with me, to ring for more or less rope as I may have occasion for, and inform you of my being alive. But since there is no remedy, heaven prosper me." Then kneeling down he in a low voice recommended himself to the divine providence for assistance and success in an adventure so strange, and in all appearance so dangerous. Then raising his voice, "O thou, mistress of my life and motions," cried he, "most illustrious and peerless Dulcinea del Toboso, if the prayers of an adventurous absent lover may reach the ears of the far distant object of his wishes, by the power of thy unspeakable beauty, I conjure thee to grant me thy favour and protection, in this plunge and precipice of my fortune! I am now going to ingulph, and cast myself into this dismal profundity, that the world may know nothing can be impossible to him, who, influenced by thy smiles, attempts, under the banner of thy beauty, the most difficult task."

This said, he got up again, and approaching the entrance of the cave, he found it stopped up with brakes and bushes, so that he must be

obliged to make his way by force. Whereupon, drawing his sword, he began to cut and slash the brambles that stopped up the mouth of the cave, when presently an infinite number of over-grown crows and daws came rushing and fluttering out of the cave about his ears, so thick and with such an impetuosity, as overwhelmed him to the ground. He was not superstitious enough to draw any ill omen from the flight of the birds; besides, it was no small encouragement to him, that he spied no bats nor owls, nor other ill-boding birds of night among them: He therefore rose again with an undaunted heart, and committed himself to the black and dreadful abyss. But Sancho first gave him his benediction, and making a thousand crosses over him, "Heaven be thy guide," quoth he, "and our¹ Lady of the Rock² in France, with the Trinity of Gaeta, thou flower and cream, and scum of all knights-errant! Go thy ways, thou hackster of the world, heart of steel, and arms of brass! and mayest thou come back sound, wind and limb, out of this dreadful hole which thou art running into, once more to see the warm sun, which thou art now leaving."

¹ Particular places of devotion.

² See Appendix, Note 4, Chapter XXII.

The scholar too prayed to the same effect for the knight's happy return. Don Quixote then called for more rope, which they gave him by degrees, till his voice was drowned in the winding of the cave, and their cordage was run out. That done they began to consider whether they should hoist him up again immediately or no. However, they resolved to stay half-an-hour, and then they began to draw up the rope, but were strangely surprised to find no weight upon it; which made them conclude, the poor gentleman was certainly lost. Sancho, bursting out in tears, made a heavy lamentation, and fell a hauling up the rope as fast as he could, to be thoroughly satisfied. But after they had drawn up about fourscore fathoms, they felt a weight again, which made them take heart; and at length they plainly saw Don Quixote.—"Welcome," cried Sancho to him, as soon as he came in sight; "welcome dear master. I am glad you are come back again; we were afraid you had been pawned for the reckoning." But Sancho had no answer to his compliment; and when they pulled the knight quite up, they found that his eyes were closed as if he had been fast asleep. They laid him on the ground and unbound him. Yet he made no sign of waking, and all their turning

and shaking was little enough to make him come to himself.

At last he began to stretch his limbs, as if he had waked out of the most profound sleep, and staring wildly about him, "Heaven forgive you, friends!" cried he, "for you have raised me from one of the sweetest lives that ever mortal led, and most delightful sights that ever eyes beheld. Now I perceive how fleeting are all the joys of this transitory life; they are but an imperfect dream, they fade like a flower, and vanish like a shadow. Oh, ill-fated Montesiños!¹ Oh, Durandarte, unfortunately wounded! Oh unhappy Belerma! Oh deplorable Guadiana! and you the distressed daughters of Ruydera, whose flowing waters shew what streams of tears once trickled from your lovely eyes!" These expressions, uttered with great passion and concern, surprised the scholar and Sancho, and they desired to know his meaning, and what he had seen in that hell upon earth.—"Call it not hell," answered Don Quixote, "for it deserves a better name, as I shall soon let you know. But first give me something to eat, for I am prodigiously hungry." They then spread the scholar's coarse saddle-cloth for a carpet; and examining their old cupboard,

¹ See Appendix, Note 5, Chapter XXII.

the knapsack, they all three sat down on the grass, and ate heartily together, like men that were a meal or two behind-hand. When they had done, "Let no man stir," said Don Quixote; "sit still, and hear me with attention."